

IN THE CLAIMS

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Please amend claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 13 as follows:

1. (Original) A method of automatically allocating a mailbox to a called party in a digital telephone network, including the steps: receiving a call to be routed to a called party; extracting one or more relevant predefined parameters from the call; using one or more of the extracted parameters to determine the existence of a mailbox associated with the called party; if an associated mailbox exists, translating the call to that mailbox address; if there is not a mailbox number associated with the called party, allocating a mailbox from a pre-existing pool of mailboxes available for allocation to the called party; diverting the call to the allocated mailbox.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 including the steps: receiving a call to be routed to a called party; extracting one or more relevant predefined parameters from the call to identify the nature of the caller and the nature of the called destination including the called party's telephone number; using one or more of the extracted parameters to examine a database, archive, information listing or the like to determine the existence of mailbox identifier associated with the called party; if an associated mailbox exists, translating the called number to that mailbox address; if the database does not contain a mailbox identifier associated with the called number, allocating a mailbox from a pre-existing pool of mailboxes available for allocation to the called

party's telephone number; diverting the call to the allocated mailbox; notifying the called party of the waiting message.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~claim 1 or claim 2~~ claim 1 including the step of deleting the contents of the mailbox, de-allocating the mailbox and returning it to the pool of mailboxes available for allocation on the occurrence of any one of following events: no message deposits and message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message deposits have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of maintaining a pool of mailboxes available for allocation, deallocation and re-allocation, and thereby minimising the amount of required storage space for the said pool, including the steps: at a predetermined time frequency, scanning a database of mailbox allocation and usage records; from those records, detecting an allocated mailbox and determining its last usage time; if the last usage time exceeds a predetermined period, deleting the contents of the mailbox and marking the mailbox as free for re-allocation; continuing until all mailbox records have been scanned at which time the process is suspended until it conducts another cycle at the said predetermined time frequency.

5. (Original) A method of dynamically allocating a mailbox to a called party in a digital telephone network, comprising the following steps: receiving a call to be routed to a called party; extracting relevant/predefined parameters from the message; examining l inspecting a database as to the existence of an associated mailbox number translating the called number to a mailbox address, if available or, in the event that the called party does not have a mailbox/the database does not contain a mailbox number associated with the called number, assigning a mailbox to the called party telephone number; diverting the call to the allocated mailbox.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 5 in which the mailbox is allocated from a preexisting pool of mailboxes.

7. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~claim 5 or claim 6~~ claim 5 in which the called party is identified by a digital network telephone number/telephony network identifier.

8. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~claim 5 or claim 6~~ claim 5 in which the mailbox is identified by an identification number.

9. (Original) A method according to claim 8 in which the method of automatically associating a telephony network g the steps: at a predetermined time frequency, scanning a database of mailbox allocation and usage records; from those

records, detecting an allocated mailbox and determining its last usage time; if the last usage time exceeds a predetermined period, deleting the contents of the mailbox and marking the mailbox as free for re-allocation; continuing until all mailbox records have been scanned at which time the process is suspended until it conducts another cycle at the said predetermined time frequency.

10. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 9 in which the method of the automatic association allocation process can be initiated in any one of the following events: the called party does not answer the call; the called mobile network subscriber/party does not have a mailbox; the call does not originate from the called party (~~under "Option A" herein~~).

11. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any one of claims 5 to 10~~ claim 5 including the step of deleting the contents of the mailbox and de-allocating the mailbox on the occurrence of any one of following events: no message deposits and message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message deposits have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 11 including the step of de-associating the mailbox from the subscriber identifier on the occurrence of any one of

following events: no message deposits and message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message deposits have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~claim 11 or claim 12~~ claim 11 including the step of returning the de-allocated mailbox to the pool of mailboxes available for re-allocation.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 13 in which the re-allocating of the mailbox can be to a new mobile network subscriber upon the occurrence of any one of following events: no message deposits and message retrievals have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message deposits have been made within a pre-defined period; or no message